

June 13, 2005

Dear Topsfield Citizen,

At Topsfield's Town Election on May 5, 2005 voters rejected the Proposition 2\_ override requests. Four of these override rejections stand with no further action required of voters or Town Officials. The rejection for funding the general operating budget stands, but requires action to bring the budget in line with the failed override. This letter discusses the actions the Selectmen and Finance Committee jointly recommend.

At the Annual Town Meeting on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, a \$12,863,132 operating budget was approved for general government and the elementary schools. Since this budget exceeds the allowed 2\_% tax levy increase by \$212,000 and since the override was rejected, adjustments must be made accordingly.

The Selectmen and Finance Committee recommend the adjustments shown below. They include both budget revisions and use of additional funds. The Selectmen have scheduled a Special Town Meeting to be held Tuesday, June 21 to present the revised budget for your approval.

Recommended budget reductions:

Department	Approved May 3rd	Revised Budget	Budget Reduced	Effect
Council on Aging	79,623	70,019	9,604	3 month delay in replacing retiring COA Director
Planning Board	31,898	25,648	6,250	3 month delay in adding Land Use Coordinator position
Fire	564,472	544,472	20,000	3 month delay in starting 7 day by 12 hour operation
Highway	445,587	420,587	25,000	Eliminate sidewalk maintenance
Park & Cemetery	242,603	217,603	25,000	Reduced labor and other items
Elementary Schools	5,475,278	5,446,878	28,400	Reduced instructional material
Total			114,254	

Recommended use of additional revenue sources to fund the general government and elementary school budgets:

Source	Amount	Comments
Town Hall building appropriation	50,000	Funds appropriated in 2002 but not used
Free Cash	50,000	Anticipated additional State funds
Total	100,000	

The budget revisions and additional sources of funds total \$214,254 which will bring your taxes under the 2\_% levy limit. The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee respectfully ask your support for these budget revisions and the use of these two additional revenue sources. Please attend the Special Town Meeting on June 21.

Selectmen	Finance Committee	
Boyd Jackson, Chairman	Bob Winship, Chairman	Mark Manning
Ron Kuszmar	Heidi Bond	Dana Warren
John McArdle	Trudi Perry	Joel Uchenick
	Dick Gandt	